The Session of the

POETS,

Holden at the Foot of

Parnassus-Hill,

July the 9th. 1696.

LONDON,

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POETS.

THE
Seſſion of Poets,

Holden at the Foot of

PARNASSUS-HILL.

APOLLO's *Commiſſion to the Nine Muſes, as follows,*

THE celebrated *Apollo* ſendeth Greeting to our right Truſty, and well-beloved Friends: Whereas, as we are credibly inform'd, That certain infamous Poets of late have too much abuſed true Poetry, by writing ſeveral ſcandalous, impertinent, and ridiculous Plays, Poems, *&c.* upon full truſt of your great Prudence, Circumſpection, Fidelity, and Diligence, which we have conceived of you, we do by theſe Preſents name, aſſign, conſtitute, and ordain you our ſpecial Commiſſioners, giving full Power and Authority unto you, of which number *Thalia* and *Melpomene* to be two, that you ſtrictly and impartially

enquire into the Misdemeanours of the said Poets, that they may be brought to condign Punishment, and you are immediately to proceed to the accomplishment and execution of this our Regal Commission with all possible diligence, as we put our special Trust in you, and as you will answer the same at your utmost Peril.

The Court being sate, *T. B.* was first set to the Bar, who was order'd to hold up his Hand, and accordingly he did. He was Indicted by the Name of *T. B.*

The Indictment was read, as follows,

That whereas an open, notorious, and very infamous and detestable Civil War, has been, and is yet still carry'd on and prosecuted against true Poetry, and one *T. B.* late of the City of *London*, Gentleman, having no sence of Honour, or principle of Honesty, but meerly excited and seduc'd by the Instigation of sensual Appetite, did [without a black Dog in his Pocket] frequent Taverns, Tipling-Houses, *&c.* and when the Drawer brings up the Reckoning, he sends a Porter to his Bookseller to redeem him; makes him great Promises that he will make him amends in the next Copy he writes; and by putting these Blinds so frequently upon him, he designs to make the Stationer as poor as himself; that he the said *T. B.* did also scandalize two Ecclesiasticks of the Church, whereof one of them was a true ancient *Prittain* her was, as any now living in *Wales*; and the other a *Salamanca Doctor*, nay,

nay, the Ladies and Widows can't be quiet for his unruly Pen; beſides, he will make you five hundred Promiſes ere he performs one of them, in half a Years ſpace; 'tis his uſual practice to leave his little Library in Limbo to pay his Chamber-Rent, and he has wrote ſeveral things that he is aſham'd to own himſelf to be the Author of.

How ſay'ſt thou, *T. B.* art thou Guilty or not of theſe Miſdemeanors alledg'd againſt thee? *T. B.* Not Guilty.

Then the Jury was Sworn, whoſe Names were as followeth, *Thomas Critick*, *Benjamin Saphead*, *John Longhead*, *William Studious*, *Ralpho Friendly*, *John Goodfellow*, *William Courtly*, *John Blunderbuſs*, *Joſeph Petticoat*, *Peter Poor*, *Nathaniel Longſhanks*, and *Zacharias Rich*.

Clerk of the Court. *T. B.* Hold up thy Hand. You Gentlemen of the Jury, that are Sworn, look upon *T. B.* the Priſoner at the Bar, and hearken to his Cauſe.

The firſt Evidence that appear'd againſt him was Mr. *Ingenuity*, who declar'd, that he had Written ſeveral Scandalous Pamphlets, not ſuiting a Poet, who ſhould have more Sence and Honour in him; namely, *The Salamanca Nuptial*, the *Petition of the Ladies for Husbands*, *The Welch Levite toſs'd in a Blanket*, *The Widows humble Petition*, and a Book of Characters againſt ſeveral, of which one is againſt a worthy *Virtuoſo*, *&c.* tho' I muſt confeſs, [bating the ſcurrilous Expreſſions] he has written ſome things tolerably

well. Then one of his Bookſellers was call'd in to give his Evidence, whoſe Name was *Wantmoney.*

Court. What have you to alledge againſt *T. B.*

Wantmoney. Why an't pleaſe you he has borrow'd ſo much Money of me, that my poor Wife and Family was forced Yeſterday to dine upon Shins of Beef.

Court. Pray, upon what Conſideration did he borrow that Money?

Wantm. He aſſur'd me he would ſuddenly write a Book and uſe me kindly for the Copy. I let him have a good Summ, and a Week after he importun'd me to lend him more; fearing I ſhould incurr his Diſpleaſure if I deny'd him, I granted his Requeſt, but I never had but one Copy from him, which was call'd a Poem in praiſe of good-natur'd Ladies, but finding it obſcene, I committed it to the Flames.

Court. Have you any thing more to acquaint the Court with relating to *T. B.*

Wantm. I have a Letter to ſhow he wrote to me to borrow eighteen Pence.

Court. Clerk of the Court, read it out audibly,

Dear Mr. *Wantmoney,*

I Muſt requeſt one favour of you, to ſend me eighteen Pence by this Porter, for I am now at Dinner with ſome very honeſt Gentlemen, but ſuch is my hard misfortune, I have not one Souſe in my Pocket: I have a Copy by me which is juſt finiſh'd, and when 'tis ready, becauſe you are a particular Friend of mine, you ſhall have it cheaper than another by four

four Shillings in the Pound. Pray excuſe this great trouble, dear Wantmoney, *from*

Your aſſured Friend to ſerve you,

T. B.

Wantm. For my part I never got the Copy, and was forc'd to put the eighteen Pence to the reſt of the Summ, which was but too big before, unleſs he had been more mindful of the Promiſe he made me.

Clerk of the Court. Call his Landreſs, Semſtreſs, Shooemaker, Taylor, Hoſier, Woollen-Draper, *&c.*

Who all appear'd, and the firſt inform'd the Court, he was indebted to her three Shillings and ſix Pence for a Fortnights Waſhing, which had been due to her a quarter of a Year. The Semſtreſs teſtify'd, that he ow'd her ſeventeen Shillings and nine Pence for two Muſling Cravats, and four Handkerchiefs, beſides being very civil to him one Evening; the Shooe-maker declar'd, he was indebted to him fifteen Shillings for three pair of Shooes, due to him this Twelve-month, and three Shillings he lent him upon a Proviſo, that he would write his Wife a Copy of Verſes in praiſe of Matrimony. The Taylor teſtify'd, he was indebted to him for making one Suit of Cloaths, and for turning another Suit the inſide outward.

Clerk of the Court. Pray call Mr. *Eaſy* into the Court, who appear'd accordingly,

Court. Well Mr. *Easy*, what have you to object against *T. B.* at the Bar, look at him narrowly, are you certain you know him?

Easy. God knows, I and my Wife know him too well to our Sorrow.

Court. Pray Mr. *Easy* give an account to the Jury what you know of him.

Easy. This is the knowledge I have of him. I must acquaint this Honourable Court that *T. B.* lodg'd at my House during the space of two Years, but never paid me one Farthing of Rent; and when I desir'd my Spouse to turn him away, she cry'd, Prithee, my Deary, why so, he is a very handsome, civil, obliging Gentleman, and to speak my real Thoughts, I always found his Company very diverting; but I had no Patience to hear my Wife commend him at this extravagant rate, but told him plainly, he must provide himself another Lodging, for I would harbour him no longer under my Roof, let him nestle where he would. Accordingly [I'll say that for him] he took me at my word. I was the less concern'd at his going, by reason I thought I had sufficient security for my Rent, but when I look'd into his Closet, I found he had put a damn'd Sham upon my Credulity, for he had remov'd all the best Books, and left me these precious ones following, *viz.*

1. An *Italian* Book in Octavo in praise of Whoring.

2. A *Dutch* Folio in praise of Drinking.

3. Six *French* Books in *Duodecimo*, one concerning the cunning Intrigues of the City Wives of *Paris*; another relating to the Amours of the

Dutchess

Dutcheſs of *Kikoobry*, with my Lord *Bumpho*; a third was a Receipt Book of my Lady *Termagant's*, uſeful for Families, directing the good Wives how to make the moſt ſovereign green Salve how to cure a cut Finger, or ſore Legs, wherein there was an approved Remedy againſt the biting of Fleas, and for prevention of Bugs, *&c.*

4. My Lord *Rocheſter's* Poems.

5. *Salmon's* Cure of *Lues Venerea*, *Anglice French Pox*; and his Cure of moſt Chronical Diſtempers incident to Mankind.

6. The ſcouring of Eccleſiaſtical Conſciences, with the anointing or ſpiritual Balm of *Gilead*; or a *Sunday's* Penitentiary Walk from *Aldgate*-Church to *Weſtminſter*-Abby. A Manuſcript.

7. An Amorous Dialogue between *Tullia* and *Octavia*, in *Latin*. And a very precious Book call'd, *Aretine's Poſtures*. With the Secret Hiſtory of *Dildo's* ſo much in requeſt with the Lad—

8. The dreadful Fight between the Frogs and the Mice. *Virgil's* Gnat, and *Ovid's* Flea. Sir *Thomas Moor* in praiſe of Folly; The World in the Moon; Foxes and Firebrands; The Devil's an Aſs; *Catullus Tibullus*, with ſeveral ſmall *Latin* Books, Hiſtorical and Poetical. The Art of making an Amour, or the moſt dextrous Method of making a City Cuckold, a Poem, in Manuſcript. A little Tract how to cure Corns and Chilblains, with an Appendix how to prevent Miſcarriages in the Female Sex. *Pantagruel's Hypotheſis*, teaching how to fly in the Air. A Hiſtory of the Pygmies and Myrmidons, engaging the Cranes. Wonderful Curioſities of *Abel Fu-*

ragio,

vagio, the *Arabian* Philoſopher, with a pleaſant Diſcourſe of *Giges*'s invincible Ring. The pleaſant Hiſtory of the *Titans* making War with the Gods, and how *Pelion* was flung upon *Oſſa*. The pleaſant Hiſtory of Reynard the Fox, and *Tom* the Tinker's Conſolation to his Wife *Joan*, upon the Death of Son *Roger*; the beating of *John* the Country-man by his Wife *Joan* for non-performance of Family-duty; a Manuſcript written in Burleſque. And laſtly, another fair Manuſcript in Proſe, call'd, The way of Wheedling, or the Art of borrowing Money, with deſign never to pay you again.

Court. Truly a compleat Catalogue of choice, learned, and ingenious Books. Mr. *Eaſy*, Have you any thing elſe to inform the Honourable Court?

Mr. *Eaſy.* No.

The Witneſſes that were brought againſt him having given in their Evidence, the Court ask'd *T. B.* what he had to ſay in his own Defence, as to theſe Matters objected againſt him. He ſaid he would make his Defence, and deſir'd ſome Witneſſes might be call'd to teſtifie their Knowledge, which was done accordingly.

Clerk of the Court. Call in *T. B*'s Evidence. Mr. *Lovehonour* appear'd.

T. B. Mr. *Lovehonour* pray ſatisfie the Court what you know of me.

Mr. *Loveh.* I know the Gentleman to be a Man of Sence, and has had the benefit and advantage of Academical Education, joyn'd to good natural Parts, which makes him the more acceptable. I know likewiſe he has Written, as well as

as Printed, ſeveral Ingenious Pieces, and underſtands the *French* Tongue very well; ſeeing therefore he has theſe acceptable Qualifications to recommend him, I hope the Gentlemen of the Jury will not find him Guilty.

Court. Is this all you have to ſay in his behalf?

Mr. *Loveh.* 'Tis all that occurs to my Mind at preſent.

T. B. I think what Mr. *Lovehonour* has ſpoken is ſufficient; as for my being Indebted, that is but a *Spaniſh Peccadillo*, that's a ſmall Fault that all the Chiming Crew are uſually guilty of, therefore as I am a Son of *Apollo*, that can't be juſtly alledg'd againſt me as a Crime, for the buſineſs I am try'd for is whether I am a good Poet: But however, ſince I have bin ſcandaliz'd for making my Bookſellers poor, I'll call in one Evidence that ſhall bring proof to the contrary. Call Mr. *Eatwell.*

Clerk of the Court. Call Mr. *Eatwell.*

Eatwell. Here.

T. B. Mr. *Eatwell* pray ſatisfie the Court and the Jury, what Money you have gotten by my Pamphlets.

Eatw. Shall I acquaint them firſt how much Money you borrow'd of me?

T. B. No, no, that is every way needleſs and impertinent.

Eatw. Gentlemen I muſt inform you, that ſince I have been acquainted with Mr. *T. B.* I have gotten 20*l.* by Printing his Pamphlets, 5*l.* I got by a Paper of Verſes call'd, the *Caſtration of a Quaker* in *Moorfields*, for his having too excellent a Faculty at propagating too many *Yeas* and *Nays*.

T. B.

T. B. Hold, hold.

Court. Don't moleſt him, pray go on.

Eaw. I publiſh'd another Copy of Verſes call'd, *The Young-Man's way of Courting a Jolly Buxom Widow*, by that I got 2 *l.* 5 *s.*

Likewiſe I publiſh'd another Paper of Verſes, which expos'd the Money-Tellers from the Check to the Goldſmiths Apprentice, by which I have already got 3 *l.* 10 *s.* and I hope before I have done I may get as much more: I had almoſt forgot, there is moreover a Supplement call'd, *The Art of Stock Jobbing*, from the Grave Alderman to the Officious Journey-man, with ſeveral other choice Pamphlets too tedious to enumerate. I hope theſe may ſuffice to give you a taſte of his Ingenuity.

Court. Have you any more Witneſſes to produce? if you have, let them be call'd.

T. B. I could produce more, but I hope theſe are ſufficient, therefore I ſhall call no more.

Then Mr. *Laurel*, Judge of the Court, having ſumm'd up the Evidence in a ſuccinct and learned Diſcourſe, deſir'd the Jury to weigh with Judgment what the Evidence had produc'd for, as well as objected againſt *T. B.* and bring in their Verdict accordingly. The Jury went out for a quarter of an Hour, and brought him in Not Guilty.

Upon which *T. B.* return'd the Court his hearty Thanks, and ſaid he would be very careful hereafter to diſquiet the Court no more upon any ſuch petty Brangles, for he deſign'd to ſet up a School to teach Youth, where he would be *Dominus fac totum*, and by *William Lily*'s Charter, Slaſh, Whip, and Quarter, where he would be abſo-

abſolute in his little Territories, and be accountable to neither Judge nor Jury to canvaſs or pry into his proceedings.

Then *T. D.* was called to the Bar, and the Indictment was read as followeth.

Whereas *T. D.* not being indu'd with the leaſt ſenſe of Honour; but being ſolely mov'd, and ſeduc'd by an infernal Inſtigation of ſenſual Pleaſure, did frequently pawn his Cloak in Taverns to get a good Dinner, not regarding that deference and reſpect which is due to the Dignity of a Poet; and in defiance of his Renowned Patron *Parnaſſus* would be Ebrious, Whore, and ſing obſcene Songs of his own Compoſing, write fulſome and nonſenſical Plays, and ſtarve poor *Venter* to keep a Foot-Boy dangling after him. He always Stutters but when he Swears, for he never pronounces *Dammee ye Dog* but with the greateſt Deliberation: He has one more admirable Excellency, which is to make Panegyricks in his own Praiſe, and ſays all the Wits in the Town are but *Don Quixots* to him; that the Town is highly inamour'd with his Songs; he will often tell you how much ſuch a Lady, Dutcheſs, and Marchioneſs was raviſh'd with his ſweet Voice, when his hoarſe Throat could never recommend him to my Lady's Chamber-Maid; but ſometimes he will ingratiate himſelf into the favour of a Citizen's Wife, when her Husband is gone out of Town; he never wrote a good Poem in his Life, except a ſcurrilous one againſt a Reverend Doctor of the Church; and

if

if his Foot-Boy asks him for a new Livery, he calls him Rogue and Raſcal, and turns him out of his Service.

Clerk of the Court. Hold up thy Hand, Art thou Guilty or not of the flagitious Crimes thou art accuſed?

T. D. Not Guilty.

Clerk of the Court. Call Mr. *Witty.* Pray Sir give an Account of what you know as to *T. D.*

Mr. *Witty.* I was acquainted with him when he was an Apprentice to a Scrivener, and to my certain knowledge his Maſter was forc'd very frequently to Baſtinado him for Scribling Nonſence, and for being too familiar with his Maids, for the Youth was ſo very ſweet upon them that he could not keep any of them long in his Houſe for the ſaid *T. D.*

After he left his good Maſter, he muſt needs ſet up for a Wit, and he begins firſt with a Ballad called, *The Beautiful Young Virgins Lamentation for the loſs of her Sweet-heart*, for the Copy he got two Shillings dry Money, and ſix Pence wet: After he had continu'd the Ballad-Trade for ſome Years, he begins to aim at a Song; and I muſt tell you he had a notable way at Song-compoſure, for he fanſies he can do it as well as any third Rate Poet in Town; for his Plays they were intolerable Jargon, indeed if epitomiz'd they might ſerve for ſome Merry-Andrew in *Bartholomew-Fair*; for his Poems, his Bookſeller can tell you what Fuſtian they were, having ſold almoſt the whole Impreſſion for waſte Paper.

Clerk

Clerk of the Court. Call Mr. *Littlewit*, one of his Booksellers, who appear'd before the Honourable Court.

Mr. *Littlewit* pray inform the Court how Mr. *T. D*'s Books sold.

Mr. *Littlewit.* Truly very indifferently. The first Inducement I had to be concern'd with him, he wrote a Copy of Verses which were something scurrilous, by which I gained 1 *l.* 13 *s.* 6 *d.* but by his Books and Plays I lost considerably, particularly by the Elegies he wrote, for I made waste Paper of the most of them, in order to have it Damask'd, to put on the inside of Trunks. I have one Story to relate before this Honourable Court, which, having receiv'd it from his own Mouth, deserves the more esteem from the relater.

Court. Aye, by all means, 'twill be very acceptable.

Mr. *Littlew.* You must know the last Summer he went to drink the Waters, and lodging where a Citizen had a very beautiful Wife, Mr. *T. D.* soon observ'd it, and finding her something good-natur'd and familiar, a more than usual amorous Intrigue was secretly carry'd on unknown to the Husband, for she admits him into her Bed, whilst her Husband was gone a Hunting. One Morning as he was going out he acquaints his Wife he should not come home to Dinner that day; upon which good News immediately she gives the said *T. D.* notice, that they might miss no opportunity of fulfilling their Desires; the Husband being gone, he injoy'd her with the greatest transport, and all imagi-

nable

nable ſatisfaction, but her Husband returning unexpectedly, finds the Spark in Bed with his Wife; he ſaid nothing at that time, but the next Morning he met *T. D.* at the Wells, where he Chaſtis'd him very heartily with his Horſe-Whip, till he cry'd out Murder, and proteſted he would never be concern'd more with his Wife, and beg'd on his Knees that he would forgive him. Upon this counterbuff poor Pillgarlick was forc'd to leave the Wells, and the inrag'd Husband went home to chaſtize his Wife.

Clerk of the Court. Call Mr. *John Mendclothes*, Pray Mr. *Mendclothes* what have you to ſay againſt *T. D?*

Mendcl. I have made three Livery-Suits for his Footmen, but he never paid me for them, beſides a Crown-piece he borrow'd of me the laſt time I was at the Tavern with him. I have no more to ſay.

Clerk of the Court. Call Mr. *Diviſion* the Lawyer.

Serjeant. Call Mr. *Diviſion* into the Court.

Diviſion. Here.

Serjeant. Come into Court.

Clerk of the Court. Pray Mr. *Diviſion*, what have you to ſay againſt *T. D.* ſpeak the truth, and nothing but the very truth, ſo help you God?

Mr. *Diviſion.* About three Years ago *T. D.* imploy'd me as his Lawyer in a Cauſe depending between an old wither'd Crone and himſelf; for which piece of good Service he never ſatisfy'd me, tho' I got him off by a Trick.

Court. Pray tell us the caſe.

Divi-

Diviſion. I deſire to be excuſed.

Court. No, you muſt tell it us.

Diviſion. This was the caſe: About three Years and a half ago, he was very familiar with a wretched piece of Mortality, Aged about fifty five Years, upon this Proviſo, that the ſaid *T. D.* would write her two Songs, and ſing them to her for an Hours ſpace for a Week together; now the ſaid *T. D.* after he had got her Honeſty, he neglected his promiſe, upon which an Action of Treſpaſs was laid upon the ſaid *T. D.* for Raviſhing of the ſaid Old Woman; he ſent for me, and imploy'd me in this doubtful caſe as his Attorney, which I faithfully proſecuted, and brought him off with flying Colours; that is the whole Summ and Subſtance of what I know of him.

Clerk of the Court. What have you to ſay Mr. *T.D.* to theſe Matters alledg'd againſt you?

T. D. I have ſeveral things to alledge in my own Defence againſt what they object, and accuſe me of. I have *Sub pœna'd* ſeveral Perſons to come in and give Evidence on my behalf; but they have fail'd me, therefore I muſt make my own defence.

Firſt, As to what Mr. *Witty* alledges, I do not much deny it, but under favour in that particular point wherein he reflects on my Writings, I think they are as elaborately and carefully written as any Poets in Town, which I am willing to leave to the Arbitration of the Jury: As for Mr. *Littlewit*, my former Bookſeller, I do ſay he is an errant Lyar, for he has got much Money by me, particularly by a Song I wrote

in praiſe of the Tories againſt the damn'd Whigs, he confeſs'd to me he got 50*s.* by it. I wrote another Poem call'd the honeſt Whig, againſt the knaviſh, intriguing, raſcally Tories, which likewiſe ſold very well: Some it may be will object and ſay, I am *Jack of all Sides*, for indeed this is a grand Miſtake to ſcandalize me upon ſuch an Account; for 'twas never known that a Poet ever troubl'd his Noddle much about Religion; for Lawyers and hungry Poets, Phyſicians, and Apothecaries, *Sunday* is always the beſt Day in the Week with them for Practice and Study. And for the Prickloufe Taylor, I can prove by all the Footmen I ever kept, that I never gave them any Liveries, ſo far am I from giving them two in a Year [for you muſt know we Poets are ſeldom rich] for when egad I thought the Rogues wanted Cloaths, to ſave Money I turn'd them away, therefore I hope the Gentlemen of the Jury will not believe this lying Taylor's Teſtimony.

Mr. *Mendc.* By the Oath I have taken he had the Liveries of me, and I am told when they were made up, ſoon after pawn'd them to a Broker for ready Cole, and ſaid he would be ſure to redeem them again, as ſoon as his next Play ſhould come on to be acted.

T. D. By *Jove*, and all the Immortals, 'tis a notorious falſhood; but for what Mr. *Diviſion* alledges, I muſt own there is ſomething of Truth in that.

Then the Court Summ'd up the Evidence, and the Jury going out a little to agree upon their Verdict, brought him in Guilty of

of the ſaid Miſdemeanours he was charged with.

Clerk of the Court. Jaylor look to *T. D.* the Priſoner at the Bar.

Purſuant to the Commiſſion lately granted by the great *Apollo* to the Nine Muſes, you are ſtrictly to inquire into the Miſdemeanours of ſeveral other Poets, that they may be brought to condign Puniſhment.

The Court being ſate, Silence was made, and *E. S.* was ſet to the Bar, who was order'd to hold up his Hand, and accordingly he did, and was Indicted by the name of *E. S.* of the City of *London*, Gentleman.

The Indictment was read as follows.

Whereas *E. S.* not having the fear of Honour and Honeſty before him, but being excited by the Inſtigation of ſenſual Pleaſure, one Night at *Chelſey*, after he had ſup'd, Cormorant like, devour'd forty two poch'd Eggs, and got a Miſtriſs into the Play-Houſe with him, for another to ſteal away from him; that he writes Drolls for *Bartholomew-Fair*, and Love-Letters for Maid-Servants, Ballads for *Pye-Corner* and *London-Bridge*; that he will write an *Epithalamium* on any Marry'd Perſon to get Half a Crown; likewiſe Dedicate one Book to a dozen Perſons: He has bin very converſant and familiar with moſt of the Priſons about Town, and will tell you with a great deal of pleaſure, that he has bin Arreſted above a hundred times; ſome Actions for detaining poor Servants Wages, and ſome for

running a long ſcore for Belly-Timber, [for you muſt know he has a ſwinging Appetite]; likewiſe for being too familiar with his Landlords Daughters, and ſometimes with his loving Landlady, *&c.* He admires the *Perſians* mightily, for he loves to Worſhip the Riſing-Sun, he loves to run with the Current; in one King's Reign he inveighs againſt Popery, and in another Princes he is for it, *huſteron proteron*, back-ſtroke and fore-ſtroke, juſt as ſerves his Intereſt; when he borrows Money he ſwears by the Living God, he will return it again by ſuch a time, but he'll be ſure to fail you; and tho' in an inſtant after an hearty Supper he will ſwallow down a prodigious quantity of poach'd Eggs, yet he will tell you he was five Hours eating of them; if you diſcourſe him about a Play that is to be Acted, he'll acquaint you he deſigns it for an *Opera*, will tell you the number of the Scenes, what Habits are propereſt to be worn, what Actors, both Men and Women, muſt be concern'd in it, what Fireworks, Songs, *&c.* and will mortifie you a long Hour in the relating it, and ſpeaks ſo confounded loud, that were you ſtill near the obſtreperous ſound, you muſt ſhut your Ears, or elſe the terrible noiſe would incommode you as much as the Cataracts of the River *Nilus*. When *E. S.* lodg'd near *Wild ſtreet*, about half a Year ago, he hir'd a Perſon to tranſcribe in Capital-Letters over the Door, theſe words following.

Here

Here you may have Love-Letters written, either for Male or Female, Letters from a Son to a Father, and from a Parent to his Son; Amorous Letters, or Love-Epiſtles, from a ſparkiſh Gallant to his Charming Miſtriſs; Petitions to the Treaſury for Money, Petitions to Courtiers to procure Places at Court, Petitions for Mechanicks to get their Moneys from Perſons of Quality.

Inquire for his Lodging up three pair of Stairs you may know further.

Clerk of the Crown. How ſai'ſt thou *E. S.* Art thou Guilty of the Miſdemeanours whereof thou ſtand'ſt Indicted, or not Guilty?

E. S. Not Guilty.

Clerk of the Crown. How wilt thou be try'd?

E. S. By the Nine Muſes.

Clerk of the Crown. Great *Apollo* ſend thee a good Deliverance.

E. S. I hope the Honourable Court will allow me Council, as is uſual in ſuch caſes.

Court. You ſhall have Councel aſſign'd you.

Then Counſellor *Gripe-faſt* appear'd for *E. S.* and ſpake as followeth.

Counſellor *Gripe-faſt.* I am aſſign'd of Councel for *E. S.* and I hope there is nothing I ſhall ſay in defence of my Client, ſhall be conſtru'd by any in an ill ſence. He ſtands Indicted by the Name of *E. S.* Gentleman, for being Guilty of ſeveral Miſdemeanours, which do not appear of great moment and conſequence, relating only

to hungry Belly, Drolls in *Bartholomew-Fair*, Epithalamiums, Ballads, Borrowing a little Money now and then of a Friend, and by reason of his Necessity, not so very punctual in repaying his Debt according to promise, which if a Fault is esteem'd but a slender one in a Wit, who is very frequently put to his Shifts, and is forc'd to try all ways imaginable to keep a few Pence in his Pocket, which his Landlord, and a great many other Debtors are ready to receive, before it reaches his Hands. I must acquaint the Honourable Court, that this Author, [setting aside some little Irregularities, which I cannot wholly excuse] applies his Muse chiefly to Tragedy, wherein I must confess he has been Tragically dealt withal, by one who was but too Tyrannically inclin'd to those who gave him the least distast: But Time has its changes, and he has liv'd to see his Enemy humbl'd, if I may not say justly punish'd for that and other Crimes which have been laid to his charge: Let not therefore any one animadvert too satyrically upon my Clients faults, but without making any sarcastical Reflections upon his Poetical Genius, I must acquaint you that he has written Nine Plays, which have bin receiv'd upon the Stage with good Applause; and Copies of Verses on several Subjects, both in Verse and Prose, tho' I am afraid some of them will not much advance his Reputation; but not knowing exactly what he has wrote upon such Subjects, I shall omit further mentioning of them. I hope the Honourable Court will have tender Sentiments of *E. S.* notwithstanding his little Extravagancies, for never

was

was there such freedom and liberty of Debate and Argument as now, and we are very heartily thankful for it: He is a well-wisher to the Muses, and designs to die in their Service; therefore I hope he will receive the more favour at their hands.

Court. If *E. S.* have any Evidence to appear in his behalf, let them be call'd.

Counsl. *Gripe-fast.* The warning was so slender he could not possibly have time to get his Evidence ready; but I hope what I have alledg'd on his behalf, will satisfie the Honourable Court as to those Crimes that are alledg'd against him, that he is not so criminal or black a Person as the Indictment would really represent one of his Character to be.

Court. If any Evidence had been ready upon your opening the Cause, as his Councel Mr. *Gripe-fast*, to have testifi'd their knowledge of *E. S.* it would have been the more satisfactory to the Court; but as none appears for, so I perceive there are none who come in against him, so that upon your particular Character and Knowledge, seeing he is a Son of the Muses, his Crimes will be admitted by the Honourable Court in the most favourable sense, provided he behave himself hereafter as a true Son of *Parnassus*, and no more Complaints of the like Nature disturb *Apollo*, nor the Divine Muses in their exalted Contemplations.

Then Mr. *Laurel*, chief Judge of the Court, summ'd up the Evidence in a concise and pathetical Speech, wherein he put *E. S.* in as clear a Light as possible, that they might view his Im-

perfections, as well as commendable Qualities, that the Jury might have the better Light for to bring in their Verdict.

The Jury went out for about a Quarter of an Hour, and brought him in Not Guilty.

E. S. return'd his hearty thanks to the Honourable Court, and solemnly protested he would behave himself orderly and regularly, as a Son of the Muses ought to do; and that he would not create any further disturbance in the Territories of *Parnassus*; so help him Supreme *Jove*, and the rest of the Celestial Divinities, Inhabitants of bright *Olympus*.

The Court being sate, proceeded in this manner to the Tryal of *E. R.*

Court. Make Proclamation.

Cryer. All manner of Persons concern'd at this Sessions, draw near and give Attendance.

Then the Grand-Jury were call'd, Appearances mark'd, and Witnesses Sworn, to give Evidence upon a Bill against *E. R.*

Then the Prisoner was brought to the Bar, who was thus Arraign'd.

Clerk. *E. R.* Hold up thy Hand. Which he did.

The Indictment.

You stand Indicted by the Name of *E. R.* Gentleman, a well-wisher to the Muses, and one who with the Vulgar sort passes for a Writer, tho' [with submission to this Honourable Court], he may rather be foister'd among the number of Wit-Collectors: And as I have hitherto dealt impartially in drawing up each Persons Indict-

ment;

ment; ſo I muſt perform and purſue the ſame Method, that I may maintain the Character of Impartial to which I claim an Intereſt. I muſt therefore pull off his pretended Diſguiſe, and diſcover to you the Politick Plagiary that lurks under it. I know he has made it his chief bent and Study to ſhew himſelf Maſter of the Art of ſwift Writing; and would very gladly perſwade the World, that what he writes is every Syllable *ex tempore* Wit, and dextrouſly tranſcrib'd with a running Pen. But we doubt not to make it evident, that tho' he wou'd be thought to imitate the curious Silk-worm that Spins its Web from its own Bowels; yet we ſhall make him appear like the Horſe-Leech, that lives upon the Blood of Men, drawn from the Gums, and when he is rubb'd with Salt ſpues it up again; ſo that 'tis plain, that this Rickety Poet [tho' of ſo many Years continuance] cannot go without the aſſiſtance of others. To prove this, we ſhall give you an Account by an Evidence or two.

Sollicitor. Call Monſieur *Daille* and Monſieur *Colbert*. Monſieur *Daille*, What do you know touching the Priſoner at the Bar?

Mr. *Daille.* I have been acquainted with the Gentleman at the Bar for ſeveral Years, and have correſponded with him upon the ſcore of *French* Plays, which he was very covetous of, and have ſold him ſeveral: I ſhall inſtance in ſome few, *Molieres* Plays, *Corneilles* Tragedies, *Les Contes d' Ouvile*, *Les Contes de Monſieur de la Fontaine*, which makes me apt to believe, that the Gentleman borrows in his Plots; and that his own *Genius* is either lazy, or very barren of Invention, and

that

that his Noddle is not ſo exuberant in Fancy as he would have the World believe it is.

Mr. *Sollicitor.* Monſieur *Colbert*, What have you to acquaint this Honourable Court with in relation to this Gentleman.

Monſieur *Colbert.* Being a *French* Bookſeller this Gentleman has frequented my Shop for ſome time, and I obſerv'd him to be very inquiſitive after *French* Plays; and deſir'd me not to fail to give him notice when any new ones came over out of *Holland*; and truly he has been a good Cuſtomer, having taken of his Money ſeveral times upon that ſcore, both for *French* Novels, Poems, and Plays; he bought Monſieur *de Pourceaugnac* of me, *Scaramouche*, *Rapins* Plays, *Fourberries de Scapin*, likewiſe ſeveral Opera's, and Tragedies, which I have now forgot the Authors of: So that upon the whole I am apt to believe, that few of his Plays are the genuine Off-ſpring of his own Brain; and we may rather reckon him the Midwife than the Parent of thoſe Plays which go under his Name; for I am credibly inform'd, his Cuſtom is to ſweep clean, and leave nothing behind him, for what he leaves of one, 'tis uſual for him to take into another Play; but there is one damn'd Humour the Man is poſſeſt with, tho' he borrows a whole Play, yet nothing is own'd by the Author, which ſort of unhandſome, ſhuffling Dealing favours of the higheſt Ingratitude: One Play of his call'd *Dame Dobſon*, or, *The Cunning Woman*; but in *French* *La Devinereſſe, ou les faux Enchantemens*, tho' very much applauded and follow'd in *France*, as the Epiſtle to the Original informs me, yet was

damn'd

damn'd in its Acting at the Theater. I ſhall conclude my Evidence of Mr. *E. R.* with Mr. *S.* his Opinion, late Poet Laureat of Plagiaries; "If "I (ſays he) candidly and ingeniouſly confeſs "my Theft, and am aſham'd on't; tho' I have "the Example of ſome that never yet wrote a "Play without filching moſt of it; and (like "Men that have got ſuch a ſtrange propenſity "and Inclination to Lying till they believe them-"ſelves) at length by continual Thieving reckon "their ſtoll'n Goods their own too; which is ſo "ungenteel and ignoble a thing that I cannot "but believe that he that makes a common "practice of ſtealing other Mens Wit, would if "he could with the ſame ſafety, ſteal any thing "elſe that he could handſomely get to, which "lies in his way. I think this ſharp Invective of "Mr. *S.* redounds but very little to *E. R*'s. Credit, with which I ſhall Summ up my Evidence at this time.

Having given in their Evidence the Jury withdrew to conſider of their Verdict, and after a quarter of an Hours ſtaying out, return'd, and gave in their Verdict.

Clerk. Gentlemen, are you all agreed of your Verdict?

Jury. Yes.

Clerk. Who ſhall ſay for you?

Jury. Our Foreman.

Clerk. *E. R.* Hold up thy Hand (which he did) look upon the Priſoner. How ſay you, is he guilty of the Plagiary whereof he ſtands Indicted, or not Guilty?

Foreman. Guilty.

In

In the Afternoon the Court being ſate proceeded to the Tryal of *P. M.*

Make Proclamation.

Cryer, All manner of Perſons concern'd at this Tryal, draw near and give Attendance.

Then the Priſoner was brought to the Bar, who was thus Arraign'd.

Clerk. P. M. Hold up thy Hand, which he did. Hear your Indictment read..

The Indictment.

You ſtand here Indicted by the Name of *P. M.* Gentleman, a great pretender to Poetry, whoſe Wit is ſo deeply conceal'd in his Pockets that no Body can find it: Like *Æſop*'s Bird he makes himſelf fine with the Feathers of other poor Birds, with which he ſtruts and looks as big as the Grand *Seigneur* in his Seraglio of Women at *Conſtantinople*: He is but a ſmuggler of Wit, and ſteals moſt confoundedly, but pays no Cuſtom for his ſtoll'n Wares: He makes Verſe his peculiar Province, but had never *Mercury* enough to compoſe one tolerable Diſtich. He is always Conning or Scribling, but moves as ſlowly as old *Hobſon* the *quondam* Carrier betwixt *Cambridge* and *London*, as if he had ſome ponderous Lead-weight at his Heels, like a dull Aſs he is conſtantly loaden with a huge bundle of Papers, and as true a Drudge as any Hackny poor Scribe about the Town; he is extreamly conceited of his own performances; he deſires no favour, and expects what drops from him ſhould be credited before the *Delphian* Oracle; he hates any one ſhould deal plainly with him, and loves Flat-

tery

tery as much as a Court-Lady; the Counting-Houſe and Shop is much frequented by him, where he enters himſelf a Son of *Parnaſſus*, and fancies his Divine Raptures the fitteſt Preſent and Offering for the Muſes; he abhors the Name of a dull Mecanick, and reſolves to be free of *Elyzium*; his Head is ſtuft with Sonnets and Novels, Madrigals and Riddles, Acroſticks, Funeral Elegies, Epithalamiums, Odes, Anagrams, dull Epigrams, Paſtorals, and the like Amorous Toys, wherewith he is ſo well ſtor'd that he can furniſh you in an inſtant. He can give you an exact Catalogue of *Apollo*'s Sons, what good Succeſs they meet with in their Plays, and who of them comes off with weeping Croſs: He will diſcourſe much of the Wits, and tells you he can't but reſpect them, by reaſon they pay the ſame deference to him and his Writings, otherwiſe he could expoſe them as very Dunces and Blockheads, who underſtand very little Sence, much leſs can they pretend to Poetry, but out of Gratitude and Compaſſion he will not be too Satyrical againſt them; once a Month 'tis cuſtomary with him, Cobler-like, to vamp up ſome old Lumber at the Bookſellers Charge, of tranſlated Odes, Elegies, and Epigrams, intermixt with ſome heavy Ballaſt of Proſe, for which he expects Harrangues and Encomiums from Prentice-Boys and Tyre-Women who are very fond of ſuch ſort of Ware; for Trumpery with them gains the Eſteem of Wit, being wholly Strangers to what is better. His Pockets are always ſtufft with Rhime and Nonſence, and his Tongue like a Mill-clapper never ſtands ſtill, but is eternally tearing

tearing and tormenting you. No Stationer that he deals with but is ruin'd by him, and Men avoid him as they do the Plague, for fear of the Epidemical Infection which attends it. He is the ruine and bane of Converſation, by reaſon of his clampering Tongue eternally ſounding in your Ears; he is the plague of the Preſs, and at laſt the ruine of his Bookſeller: So I leave him in full expectation of gaining a large Jointure out of *Parnaſſus*, which I would have him to Cultivate and make his beſt of, which happineſs I believe no body will envy him, but let him hug himſelf with the Conceit of, tho' it proves in concluſion but like the Cloud which amorous *Jove* ſo eagerly embrac'd in lieu of a Subſtance which he expected to enjoy; but a Chimerical Fancy muſt have ſomething to buoy it up, tho' it be as fleeting as the Clouds which poſſeſſes the Mind with the imagination of a Felicity which is as empty as the roving Fancy which firſt bred and created it: As for Comedy (tho' vain and ambitious enough) he dares not aſpire to it, for he could never out of his little ſtock furniſh himſelf with Plot and Characters to anſwer any tollerable Model; and the Converſation he keeps being generally mean; he is at ſo great a loſs for Humour, that the utmoſt Inſtruction he can arrive at is only to jumble out ſome little diverting Fancy which may ſerve a Puppet-Shew, or a Merry-Andrew at *Bartholomew-Fair*, which I leave him to improve and make his beſt of, it being the higheſt flight which we can expect that his Pen-feather'd Muſe is ever able to carry him.

Cryer.

Cryer. What say'ſt thou *P. M.* art thou Guilty or not?

P. M. Guilty.

The Court being again ſate, *A. O.* was commanded to be ſet to the Bar.

Then the Names of the Jury, that were Impanell'd for his Tryal were call'd over, which were as followeth, *viz.*

Thom. Woodbewiſe.	*Gideon Moroſe.*
Rich. Ticklefancy.	*Solon Rattlepate.*
Hen. Numbſcull.	*Will. Troubledifcourſe.*
Jo. Selfconceit.	*Franc. Brainleſs.*
Giles Snarlatwit.	*Edw. Pratetoomuch*, and
Jeffery Spoiljeaſt.	*Mat. Hardtopleaſe.*

Clerk of the Crown. Cryer, make Proclamation.

Cryer. All manner of Perſons that have any thing to ſay againſt the Priſoner at the Bar, let them come in and inform the Court thereof, and they ſhall be heard.

Court. Clerk of the Crown, read the Indictment.

Clerk of the Crown. A. O. Thou ſtandeſt here Indicted by the Name of *A. O. homuncule*, for that thou (being of a Heterogeneous Birth, between the *Simian* and *Bantam* Races) haſt, in Emulation of Mankind, the Darling of the Gods, preſumptuouſly aſpir'd, without Licence or Warrant from *Apollo*, *Minerva*, or the Muſes, to mount the ſacred Hill of *Parnaſſus*, and thruſt thy impure Fiſts into the bleſs'd Streams of *Helicon.*

licon. Since which thou haſt alſo (malitiouſly, in deſpight of thy Stars, and maugre the certain knowledge of all Mankind to the contrary) pretended to be Inſpir'd, and impudently rank'd thy reptile-dande-prat-ſelf among the celebrated Poets of the Age; whereas vile Poetaſter as thou art! thou haſt only ſcribbled two-penny waſt-paper Pamphlets for Half-a-Crown the Printed-ſheet, to the inevitable deſtruction of the *Engliſh* Ballad-ſtock. Moreover, to wriggle and inſinuate thy Aſthmatical, Cammel-back'd, contemptible Corpuſculum into the good Opinion of overgrown, tumefi'd, Ale-wives, and nauſeous, ſulphureous, belching *Aqua-vitæ* Women, that thou mayſt with the more freedom, and leſs reluctancy tick for their Liquors, and borrow their Money: Thou doſt inſolently pretend to be Tutor to that Lord, and t'other Lady of Quality, for the *French* Tongue; and that a certain Perſon of Honour has put thee upon Writing the Amours of Monſieur *N.* and Madam *V.* by way of Novel, for which thou art to be paid forty Crowns upon finiſhing the Copy; whereas in verity there is no ſuch Deſign in being, but a meer fiction to delude thy Hoſteſſes. Then as to thy Morals and Manners (as if thou hadſt been born at *Apeſhill* by *Gibralter*, and receiv'd thy Education with *Tom Dove* at *Baily*'s Academy on the *Bank ſide*) thou art ſo iraſcible, obſtreperous, troubleſome, affronting, contradictory, and abuſive, and at other times ſo ridiculouſly affected in thy Grimaces, and nauſeous fawning upon every one in Company, beſides thy hypocritical, often-repeated Ejaculations in thy Cups, that

that thou art the bane of Good-fellowſhip, and ought'ſt to be ſpew'd out of all Ingenious Converſation.

The Summ of the Indictment being thus read, the Clerk of the Crown proceeded to Arraign the Priſoner after this manner.

Clerk of the Crown. A. O. Hold up thy Hand at the Bar, (which the Priſoner did accordingly) Art thou Guilty of the Crimes and Miſdemeanours laid to thy Charge in the Indictment, or not?

A. O. Not Guilty.

Clerk of the Crown. Cryer, make Proclamation for the Evidence to appear, and give in their Teſtimonies againſt the Priſoner at the Bar.

Cryer. All manner of Perſons, that have any thing to inform the Court of, touching the Priſoner at the Bar, let them draw near, and give their Attendance, that they may be ready to teſtifie their Knowledge when they ſhall be called by the Court.

Mr. *Attorney General.* May it pleaſe the Serene and Honourable Judges of this Court, and obſerve you Gentlemen of the Jury, that for the eaſe of the Court, and the better diſcharge of my Duty in this Tryal, I ſhall ſumm up the whole Charge of the Indictment againſt the Priſoner at the Bar under theſe Heads following, *viz.*

Firſt, That the Priſoner at the Bar, is an Homuncule, below the Standard of Mankind, of a Heterogeneous Birth, and Preternatural Race.

Secondly, That he presumptiously, without Warrant, and against his Stars, sets up for a Poet.

Thirdly, That he hath (by colour of such his Pretensions) scandalously run in Debt with Ale-Wives and *Aqua-vitæ* Women for their Liquors, besides borrowing Money of them.

Fourthly, That he is as Snapping, Snarling, and Grinning as a Monkey; as Ejaculative in his Ebriety as Mother *Coney* the *quondam* Religious Bawd; and by his brutish Passion, the bane of good Fellowship.

Which four Articles I shall prove in Order, and first as to the first. Cryer, Call Dr. *Prometheus* the Man Midwife.

Dr. *Prometheus* accordingly appear'd, and was Sworn.

Attorny Gen. Dr. *Prometheus*, Pray give the Court an Account of what you know, as to the Shape and Race of the Prisoner at the Bar.

Dr. *Prom.* May it please this Honourable Court, the Goddess *Lucina* being inauspicious at the time of the Birth of the Prisoner at the Bar, I was call'd to assist at the Delivery; his Mother had a hard Labour on't, but by my help she was at last safely Delivered. The Birth indeed was so uncouth, that by the Verdict of the Gossips there present, it had lik'd to have been drown'd, according to the Custom of the *Chineses* in such cases, had not the over-tenderness of the Mother to her Off-spring, by her Prayers and Tears prevented it.

Court.

Court. Pray Doctor, what Opinion had you of the Matter? Which ſide was you of? Was you for drowning or ſaving?

Dr. *P.* Upon a ſtrict ſurvey of the Birth, I found the Face ſomewhat reſembled that of an Ape, and that the Body was ſo minute that it ſcarce reach'd the Stature of the leaſt new-born Bantamite; but, yet I muſt needs ſay, taking it all together, it was not unlike to humane Shape; which I inform'd the Mother of, to her no little ſatisfaction. Beſides, I farther told her, that I believ'd her Son was like to make as good a figure in the World as the little wither'd fat'd Captain I have read of in *Homer*, by the name of *Tidius*, ſo much prais'd (by that Learned Pen) for his Valour, who was notwithſtanding, ſuch an extraordinary diminntive Dwarf, that *Virgil* in his *Priapeia* (amongſt his Epigrams) ſeems to make him but juſt as high as a Man's *Catzo* is long, in this Diſtich.

Me miſerum lepidas fallit menſura Puellas,
Non habet hæc alio Mentula majus eo.
Utilior Tidius, qui (ſi quis credit Homero)
Ingenio pugnax, corpore parvus erat.

Att. Gen. Doctor, Doctor, you are too partial in the caſe, not without ſuſpicion of being biaſs'd by the extraordinary Fee his Mother gave you when the Priſoner was born.

Dr. *P.* Were it ſo Mr. Attorney, yet that's no ſuch mighty thing to raiſe a note of admiration upon in this Age, or any other I yet heard of; for (under the favour of this Honourable

Court) good Mr. Attorney, does not every Client that gives his Council a ſwinging extraordinary Fee expect his aforeſaid Lawyer ſhould ſtrain a point for him? If ſo, wherein lies the diſparity? The Boy at *Weſtminſter* School was certainly in the right, when (thanking a late Lord Chancellor for ſeveral Guinea's his Lordſhip had given him for ſome extempore Verſes) he ſaid

Sic quoque Cauſidici vendere verba ſolent.

Court. Forbear, you both forget your ſelves, and have loſt that reſpect is due from you to the Dignity of the Court.

Priſoner. An't pleaſe your Honours, the Doctor is upon his Oath, and therefore 'tis out of Mr. Attorney's Province to cenſure him at this rate, as if he acted contrary to his Conſcience, of which neither he, nor the Court it ſelf (with ſubmiſſion) can poſſibly take cognizance. It ſeems as if Mr. Att—— wou'd have no body take Bribes (or, when taken, do any thing for them) but himſelf.

Court. Mr. *O.* Keep your ſelf within compaſs, and have a care of being Impertinent, leſt it turn to your prejudice.

Priſoner. I thank your Honours, with all the ſubmiſſion and profound reverence imaginable, for taking ſo much care of poor me and my Cauſe! *Jove*'s Bleſſings attend you all for it!

Att. Gen. I hope the Court is ſatisfy'd in the juſt deference and eſteem I bear to it; 'tis my Zeal only to Truth that obliges me to be thus forward

forward in detecting all clandeſtine Practices are endeavour'd to be put upon the Court; in order whereunto, I ſhall (by leave of the Court) confront Dr. *Prometheus*'s Evidence with anothers. Cryer, call Dr. *Samus*, who accordingly appear'd, and was Sworn.

Att. Gen. Dr. *Samus*, Pray give an account to the Court, what you know concerning the Priſoner at the Bar, in any reſpect.

Dr. *S.* Truly (with ſubmiſſion to the Court) I muſt needs ſay, that I know nothing of the Priſoner at the Bar but by Tradition. I was acquainted with one Dr. *Magus*, a Man-midwife, who told me, that he underſtood by one of the Goſſips that was at the Birth of the Priſoner at the Bar, that he was born a Monkey, but became in time ſo cunning as to bite off his Tail, which with the care and fatigue of his Mother's teaching him to walk upright, and indure being cloath'd, rendred him as like humane as you ſee. Beſides——

Priſoner. Hold thou antick traditional Bombaſt, offspring of the firſt Broacher of figmental cogitative Abſurdities. And you Mr. Attorney, is this your deference to the Court, and zeal to Truth, to trump a Story of a Cock and a Bull, and that too upon hear-ſay? Is this your way of detecting clandeſtine Practices againſt, by putting the moſt open bare-fac'd one upon the Court, as ever yet was known in any Age? Never audacious Fellow would impoſe ſo impudently upon a Court, or was ever any Court ſo dull to ſuffer it.

Att. Gen. Extravagant brutiſh Similes!—

Court. Forbear both of you. Mr. *O.* whatever is deliver'd by way of Evidence againſt you, ſhall be look'd upon but as circumſtantial; and therefore Mr. Attorney we wou'd have you to wave this Evidence, and call ſuch as can ſpeak poſitively on their own knowledge. *Cryer*, Call Mr. *Welbred*, who appear'd and was Sworn.

Att. Gen. Pray Mr. *Welbred* give an account to the Court as to his Manners and pretenſions to Poetry.

Mr. *Welbred.* Verily (with ſubmiſſion to the Court) as to his Manners he never had any, for I believe he was born at *Hoginorton*, where the Pigs play upon the Organs, for they ſay he hates thoſe Tweedledums mortally, and calls them with *Scotch Sawny*, *Babylonian* Bag-pipes; and for his pretenſions to Poetry, as he is Dwarfiſh in Stature, ſo he is a very Pigmy at Verſifying; he is always quarrelling at the celebrated Mr. *Abraham Cowly* (our ſecond *Virgil*) for rendring *Pindar* into *Engliſh*, and thinks 'twas a Labour might be very well ſpar'd, if he had not troubl'd his Head with that crabbed *Greek* Gentleman, for the very thoughts of him puts him into a ſhaking Fit, for his ſqueamiſh Stomach could never digeſt *Greek* Roots, and ſwears he mortally hates the Pindarique Ode for his ſake: For he abominates Poetical flights, therefore his chief Talent lies in making Ballads, and for Plays the crabbed tormenting Plots in them terrifie him ſo much that he vows he will never rack his ſhallow *Pericranium* with them; ſometimes he fetches a ſtart to *London Bridge*, and ſells a two-penny Story

to

to his old Friend there, which ſupplies him with a little ready Rino; and if he venture at ſome little Novel, the dulneſs of the Language makes his Bookſeller curſe the Author, for it does not defray the coſt of Paper, much leſs pay him for the charge of the Impreſſion: He has no manner of *Genius* for Epigrams, thoſe *lepida Epigrammata* are none of his Province, nor for Paſtoral Elegy, or diverting Burleſque; he unfortunately attempted once upon the Lampooning a witty Gentleman, but did it ſo ſcurrilouſly, awkardly, and withal ſo dully, that the Gentleman exercis'd Mr. *Crabtree Bacillum* upon him very heartily, for uſurping that Province which Nature did not give him wit and ſence to manage: Indeed his chiefeſt Talent lies in compoſing ſuch ſort of Ballads, as *Patient Griſſel*, or old *Chaucer*'s goodly Ballad of our Lady, whoſe Title is uſually a moſt lamentable Example of the doleful Deſperation of a miſerable Wordling, who alas! moſt wickedly forſook the Truth of God's Goſpel, for fear of the loſs of Life, and worldly Goods.

Cryer. Call Mrs. *Swigbelly* the Ale-wife; who accordingly appear'd, and was Sworn.

Att. Gen. Pray Mrs. *Swigbelly* give an Account to the Court, what you know of this Perſon at the Bar.

Swigbelly. May it pleaſe this Honourable Court, the Perſon at the Bar has a very impudent, domineering way of calling for Liquor, he will ſoak in a Publick-Houſe from Morning till Night, Damn, and Curſe, and Hector all my Family, and Command them with as much Impudence as if they were his Foot-boys; he has run on my

Score this half Year, but I have not ſeen one farthing of his Money I'll be ſworn, never ſince he came into my Houſe, either for Lodging or Liquor, tho' he is as thirſty as a Fiſh, and eats like a Canibal. I believe the Man, (God bleſs us) is troubl'd with Maw-worms, for I am ſure ſuch a ſwinging Appetite is enough to breed a Famine where-ever he comes; as they ſay, no Graſs grows where the Grand Seignior's Horſe once ſets his Foot.

Att. Gen. Have you any thing more material to object againſt him?

Swigbelly. No, and pleaſe you, Sir.

Cryer. Call Mrs. *Sulphurbelch*, the *Aqua-vitæ* Woman; who appear'd and was Sworn.

Att. Gen. Pray Mrs. *Sulphurbelch* ſpeak your knowledge of this Perſon here at the Bar.

Sulphurbelch. And it pleaſe you the Priſoner at the Bar has run ſo far in my Debt for *Aqua-vitæ* and *Brandy*, that I am almoſt ruin'd by him; beſides, he has borrow'd a conſiderable Summ of Money of me, and if the Court does not take my ſad Condition into their ſerious Conſideration, I muſt be forc'd to ſhut up Shop, and my poor Children turn'd out of Doors as Vagabonds to beg their Bread.

Mr. Attorney General having ſumm'd up the Evidence in a conciſe and elegant Diſcourſe, gave the Jury their Charge, who went out for about the ſpace of half an Hour, and brought in the Priſoner Guilty of the ſaid ſcandalous Crimes which had been plainly prov'd againſt him.

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The Court being ſate, and Proclamation made for Silence, for all Perſons concern'd to draw near and give their Attendance. *D. M.* a Female was call'd to the Bar.

Clerk of the Court. Cryer, make Proclamation.

Cryer. O yes, the Priſoner at the Bar ſtands here Indicted, let them come forth and they ſhall be heard, and all others that are bound by Recognizance to give Evidence againſt the Priſoner at the Bar, let them come forth and give their Evidence.

Clerk. *D. M.* Hold up thy Hand. (Which ſhe did.) You that are Sworn look upon the Priſoner at the Bar, and hearken to her Cauſe, ſhe ſtands Indicted by the Name of *D. M.* Spinſter, in that ſhe very peremptorily, *mutatis mutandis*, againſt an expreſs Form in that caſe made and provided by *Apollo* and the Muſes, has Sacrilegiouſly uſurp'd that Province of Poetry no ways belonging nor appertaining unto her, for few *Sappho*'s or *Orinda*'s appear now upon the Stage, your Charge is to enquire whether ſhe be Guilty of the Fact ſhe ſtands Indicted, or not Guilty. We muſt call our Witneſſes to prove this matter of Fact, whom I am in hopes will give you a full account of this whole Affair.

Attorney General. Call Mr. *Tradewel*, and Mr. *Telltroth.* Who both appeared.

Att. Gen. Pray Mr. *Tradewel*, will you acquaint the Honourable Court with your knowledge of this Gentlewoman.

Tradewel. The Perſon at the Bar I have been acquainted with for ſome time, for ſhe has lodg'd in my Houſe theſe three quarters of a Year, ſhe

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is gay and pleaſant in her Humour and Converſation, and my Houſe is frequented much by Beaus, and the like Sparks, who admire her the more, becauſe they underſtand ſhe deſigns to ſet up for a Wit; as for her Fame I believe it to be none of the beſt, by reaſon ſhe keeps very unſeaſonable Hours, and is a great frequenter of Taverns and Muſick-Houſes, and the like places; and as for the product of her Feminine Wit, I know of none ſhe has publiſht, but a ſilly and idle account of her Journey into the Country, which if not nonſenſical, I am ſure is very fooliſh and Impertinent.

Soll. Gen. Call Mr. *Telltroth.* (Who appeared) Pray Mr. *Telltroth* acquaint the Court with your Knowledge of the Priſoner at the Bar.

Telltroth. I have been acquainted with the Priſoner at the Bar for ſome time, for I am ſure ſhe is ſtill in my Books for a Piece or two of Silk ſhe bought of me for Mantua's; as likewiſe for Fringes, Silk, and other trimming to make it up; her Promiſes are very ſpecious and fair; but if a Shop-keeper enters her once down in his Book, ſhe uſually ſticks there for three or four Years, and there's none dare Arreſt her, for ſhe has always three or four Bullies at command, who will reſcue her, and will knock any Perſon down that meddles with her; therefore (which is no ſmall Vexation to a Tradeſman) tho' ſhe will run extravagantly in Debt, yet there is no vexing of her, leſt in lieu of your Money it ſhould come to the Ears of theſe Bullies, and you get ſome good Baſtinado's over the Shoulders, inſtead of ſatisfaction. As for her Poetry, I can give but a very

ſlender

ſlender Account of it, ſhe has a little ſmattering *Genius* I think that way, upon the ſcore of Madrigals and Sonnets, and hath lately written a Tragedy, and but a very indifferent one in the Opinion of thoſe who are moſt competent Judges of things of that kind; but indeed ſhe writes like a ſelf-conceited, and opinionative Female, therefore I believe no body will envy her the good Opinion ſhe conceives of this Fruit of her Brain (for 'tis natural for all Poets, eſpecially Women, to be fond of their own Productions.) She ſays, the principal Objection made againſt her Tragedy is the warmth of it, as they are pleas'd to call it, which was too bold for the firſt flight; but gentle Love who ſtood ready to afford her an eaſie Conqueſt, did not think it convenient to purſue him too far, leſt her Laurel ſhould ſeem leſs graceful, for having made an entire Conqueſt: for fear ſhe ſhould want able vouchers, you ſee ſhe proclaims her own Triumph, and pretends the aſperſions of her ſecret Enemies made it neceſſary ſhe ſhould write her own Apology, and is very ſorry that thoſe of her own Sex ſhould be ſo far influenc'd by the Truth, to repreſent their Thoughts candidly, which plain dealing ſhe eſteems to be ill-Nature, Envy, and Detraction, and a blaſting of that graceful Laurel ſhe is ſo deſperately fond of, and if no body admires her, *Narciſſus* like, ſhe will be her own Idolater; but certainly the principal Objection againſt the Tragedy was not the warmth of it (for any Perſon who underſtands what Tragedy means, cannot but be ſenſible that the principal deſign of it is to excite the Paſſions) but 'twas the *jejune* crude Expreſſions in it which made

made the Ladies ſit ſo unconcern'd at it, who in lieu of Diverſion found themſelves Lumpiſh and Melancholy, and went away extreamly diſſatisfy'd in their Expectations, wherefore being condemn'd by the Ladies in the Boxes, who ſate ſo attentively to hear it, yet paſt ſo ſevere a Cenſure upon it, I can't tell where ſhe muſt expect a more favourable Jury to paſs Sentence upon her, than thoſe of her own Sex; which ſeeing they were ſo dogmatical in their Determination, ſhe cannot expect a more favourable Cenſure from thoſe Eagle ey'd Criticks who will make ſevere Animadverſions upon the leaſt Imperfections.

Attorney General. Mr. *Tell-troth*, have you any other material Evidence to inform the Honourable Court, touching the Priſoner at the Bar.

Tell-troth. No, I have no more to ſay, what I have ſaid, I leave it to your ſerious Conſideration, I look upon my Evidence to be home and pertinent.

Soll. Gen. If there are any more Evidences to be Sworn, let them be call'd.

Clerk. No there is no more which I know of, concern'd in this Tryal.

Then the Jury withdrew to conſider of their Verdict, and after a quarter of an Hours abſence from the Court, return'd, and gave in their Verdict, Guilty.

The Auguſt Court being aſſembl'd in the Afternoon, and Proclamation made for Silence, for all Perſons concern'd to draw near and give their

their Attendance. *M. P.* Another Female was ſet to the Bar.

Clerk. Cryer make Proclamation.

Cryer. O yes, O yes, O yes, The Priſoner at the Bar ſtands here Indicted, let them come forth and they ſhall be heard, and all others that are ſtrictly bound by Recognizance to give Evidence againſt the Priſoner at the Bar, let them come forth and give their Evidence.

Clerk. M. P. Hold up thy Hand. (Which ſhe did.) Gentlemen, you that are Sworn, look upon the Priſoner at the Bar, and hearken to her Cauſe, ſhe ſtands Indicted by the Name of *M. P.* Spinſter, in that ſhe very pertinaciouſly, malipertly, unjuſtly, and peremptorily, *mutatis mutandis*, againſt a direct and expreſs Form in that caſe ſtrictly injoyn'd and provided by *Apollo* and the Nine Muſes, hath unworthily, fraudulently, and ſacrilegiouſly uſurpt, in ſpight of her Stars, the Province of Poetry, no ways belonging nor appertaining to her, your Charge is to make ſtrict Charge and Inquiry, whether ſhe be guilty of the Fact ſhe ſtands Indicted for or not Guilty. We muſt call our Witneſſes to prove the Matter of Fact alledg'd againſt her, which we hope will be ſatisfactory.

Att. Gen. Call Mr. *Stiffrump* into the Court. Who appeared.

Att. Gen. Pray Mr. *Stiffrump* will you acquaint the Honourable Court with your Knowledge of this Gentlewoman the Priſoner at the Bar.

Stiffrump. The Female at the Bar I have been acquainted with for ſome conſiderable time, and there-

therefore can give the better Account of her, the firſt Venture ſhe expos'd unto publick View was a Novel, a very barren Diſcourſe, abounding with neither Language nor Intrigue, furniſh'd out at the Bookſeller's Charge, but I am very confident will not defray the expence of the Impreſſion. Her next attempt to ſhew her Wit was upon Comedy, which Play was damn'd in the Action, and which ſhe owns in the Preface was no more than ſhe expected, and confeſſes, that making of Plays is a Province no ways proper for the Female Sex to be concern'd in, and owns, that ſhe had not time to peruſe it exactly, to examine the Plots or Language of it, it being compos'd in a few Weeks time, and conſequently very raw and uncorrect, and leſs fit to appear upon the Stage before the ſevere Criticks of the Age, with whom a heavy inſipid Comedy is every way as unpardonable as dull Farce, muſt expect to be hiſt off the Stage, in lieu of a plaudite from the preſent Spectators: But makes a ſad Complaint, that her firſt Attempts of this Nature ſhould meet with ſo much diſcouragement, thro' her own Careleſneſs, for want of good Humour and Plot (the great excellencies of a Comedy) was the real occaſion of it: She wiſhes ſhe was Miſtriſs of Eloquence, Rhetorick, and all the exquiſite Perfections of the Pen; but her Fears are but too juſt, that when the Cloſet-peruſal ſhall make an exact ſcrutiny into it, 'twill diſcover the Woman, the imperfect Woman there, however otherwiſe apt to flatter her ſelf with her own natural Parts and Abilities; and that

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the perusal will prove tiresome, like a dull repeated Tale.

Sol. Gen. Call *Praisegod Barebones* into the Court. Who appeared.

Soll. Gen. Pray Sir, will you inform the Court of your cause of Knowledge of this Gentlewoman the Prisoner at the Bar.

Praisegod Barebones. My cause of Knowledge of the Prisoner is this, she lodg'd in my House for the space of two Years, during which time she Printed a Tragedy call'd *Ibrahim*, but so very incorrect and ill-penn'd, that it will not pass muster among the indifferent ones: There was one intolerable Blunder committed in mistaking the Emperor's Name, which is unpardonable, but she hopes no one will be so unkind to Criticize upon what falls from a Woman's Pen, as if that Sex commits Errors, that was a sufficient Asylum to protect her, when by her own Confession, the mistake being so gross, it might as well be call'd, Sir *Limberham* the Thirteenth, as *Ibrahim* the Thirteenth; but she confesses, she trusted too far to her Memory; and then the mischief on't was, the poor Creature not seeing Sir *Paul Ricaut*'s continuation of the *Turkish* History till the Play was Printed, all the Murder came out, and then in good time she tells you very gravely, she found *Ibrahim* was the twelfth Emperor: Certainly at this rate her Poetry and Skill in History may go together, for our Female would undoubtedly make a curious Writer of Annals, as well as a good Tragedian; but she was pleas'd with the Story, and ventur'd to write upon't, and therefore hopes

hopes the good-natur'd World will excuſe the Feminine Blunder, tho' it was as groſs a one as the Bull-maker of *Windſor*'s.

The Jury withdrew to conſider of their Verdict, and after a quarter of an Hour's ſtaying, return'd, and gave in their Verdict.

Then the Court proceeded to give Sentence:

Clerk. Gentlemen anſwer to your Names. *John Trueman.*

Truman. Here.

Clerk. Gentlemen are you all agreed of your Verdict.

Jury. Yes.

Clerk. Who ſhall ſay for you?

Jury. Our Foreman.

Clerk. T. D. Hold up thy Hand. (Which he did.) Look upon the Priſoner, how ſay you? Is he Guilty of the high Miſdemeanours whereof he ſtands Indicted, or not Guilty?

Foreman. Guilty.

Apollo. Our Sentence is, that for his Mortification he is to be toſs'd in a Blanket.

Clerk of the Crown. E. S.

E. S. Here.

Clerk. E. S. Hold up thy Hand. (Which he did.) Look upon the Priſoner at the Bar, how ſay you? is he Guilty of the high Miſdemeanors whereof he ſtands Indicted, or not Guilty?

Foreman. Guilty.

Apollo.

Apollo. His Sentence is, that he eat no Victuals during the ſpace of three Days, for the Chaſtizement and Mortification of poor *Venter*, and that he deſiſt from writing the *Jacobite Courant*, incerted in a new Paper called *Pegaſus*, which is publiſhed three times a Week.

Clerk. P. M.

P. M. Here.

Clerk. *P. M.* hold up thy Hand. (Which he did.) Look upon the Priſoner, how ſay you? Is he Guilty of the high Miſdemeanors whereof he ſtands Indicted, or not Guilty?

Foreman. He pleaded Guilty to the Indictment.

Apollo. Seeing he pleaded Guilty, and puts himſelf upon the Mercy of the Honourable Court; ſeeing he is but a ſmugling Poetaſter, his Puniſhment ſhall be that he Write no more.

Clerk. E. R.

E. R. Here.

Clerk. *E. R.* hold up thy Hand. (Which he did.) Look heedfully upon the Priſoner at the Bar, how ſay you? Is he Guilty of the high Miſdemeanors whereof he ſtands Indicted, or not Guilty?

Foreman. Guilty.

Apollo. His Sentence is to ſtand ſix full Hours in a Mackarel-Boat at *Billingsgate*, and all the Women that ſell Oyſters, Her-

 rings,

rings, Mackarel, &c. to have the liberty to Scold at, and pelt him with rotten Oranges all the time.

Clerk. A. O.

A. O. Here.

Clerk. *A. O.* hold up thy Hand. (Which he did.) Look upon the Prisoner, how say you? is he Guilty of the high Misdemeanors whereof he stands Indicted, or not Guilty?

Foreman. Guilty.

Apollo. His Sentence is to stand naked during the space of six Hours upon *Banstead-Downs* the first cold Day that comes.

Clerk. D. M.

D. M. Here.

Clerk. *D. M.* hold up thy Hand. (Which she did.) Look upon the Prisoner at the Bar, how say you? Is she Guilty of the high Misdemeanors whereof she stands Indicted, or not Guilty?

Foreman. Guilty.

Apollo. Her Sentence is, that she must not kiss any Man, nor be kiss'd by any Person.

Clerk. M. P.

M. P. Here.

Clerk. *M. P.* hold up thy Hand. (Which she did.) Look upon the Prisoner, how say you? Is she Guilty of the high Misdemeanors whereof she stands Indicted, or not Guilty?

Foreman. Guilty.

Apollo.

Apollo. Her Sentence is, that ſhe ſhall be deſperately in Love with ſeveral Perſons, but not one of them ſhall regard but deſpiſe and laugh at her Paſſion.

FINIS.